

NORTHUMBERLAND

Status:

Local Planning Authority:

National Grid Reference:

Ordnance Survey Sheets:

Area:

First notified: 1964*

HOLBURN LAKE AND MOSS

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 23 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Berwick upon Tweed Borough Council.

NU 051365

1: 50,000 : 75

1: 10,000 : NU 03 NE & NW

22.05 hectares 54.5 acres

Date of revision: 1983

Description

Holburn Lake was created in 1934, when the present outflow to the west was dammed. It is of international importance as a major roost for greylag geese (Anser anser) of the Icelandic population, holding more than 1% of the north west European population, i.e. upwards of 2000 birds. It is also regularly visited by large flocks of mallard, wigeon and teal and provides an inland roost for coastal wildfowl during the unfavourable weather conditions. A few pairs of shelduck, shoveler and tufted duck regularly breed here.


A large stand of great reedmace (Typha latifolia) grows on the island in the Lake, and a floating bog is present along its eastern shore. Several bogmosses (Sphagnum spp.) are found here including those of waterlogged hollows (S. cuspidatum) and those which favour the drier hummocks (S. squarrosum, S. fimbriatum).

Holburn Moss lies to the east of the lake, and is an example of mire at the dry end of the range of variation. The peat surface to the east is covered by the bogmoss Sphagnum papillosum growing under a thick mantle of ling (Calluna vulgaris). Large, damp hollows which are colonised by S. cuspidatum and soft rush (Juncus effusus), are found throughout this area, and are an unusual feature in British mires. Cranberry (Vaccinium oxycoccus) and sundew (Drosera rotundifolia) are common around the drier edges of the hollow, growing with S. rubellum. The centre of the moss is dominated by cross-leaved heath (Erica tetralix), with ling (Calluna vulgaris), and common cotton-grass (Eriophorum angustifolium) occurring widely.

The drier slopes to the west are covered with bracken (Pteridium aquilinum) and occasional gorse (Ulex europaeus) which grow on the freely draining acidic soil. Bracken gives way to ling (Calluna vulgaris) and occasional bell heather (Erica cinerea) around Copsey Hill.

Other Information

During the 1983 revision, the boundary of this site has been reduced.

This citation / map relates to a site entered in the Register of European sites for Great Britain.
Register reference number: UK000604
Date of registration: 11/11/1984
Signed: 
on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Environment

*Under Section 23 of the National Park and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949.